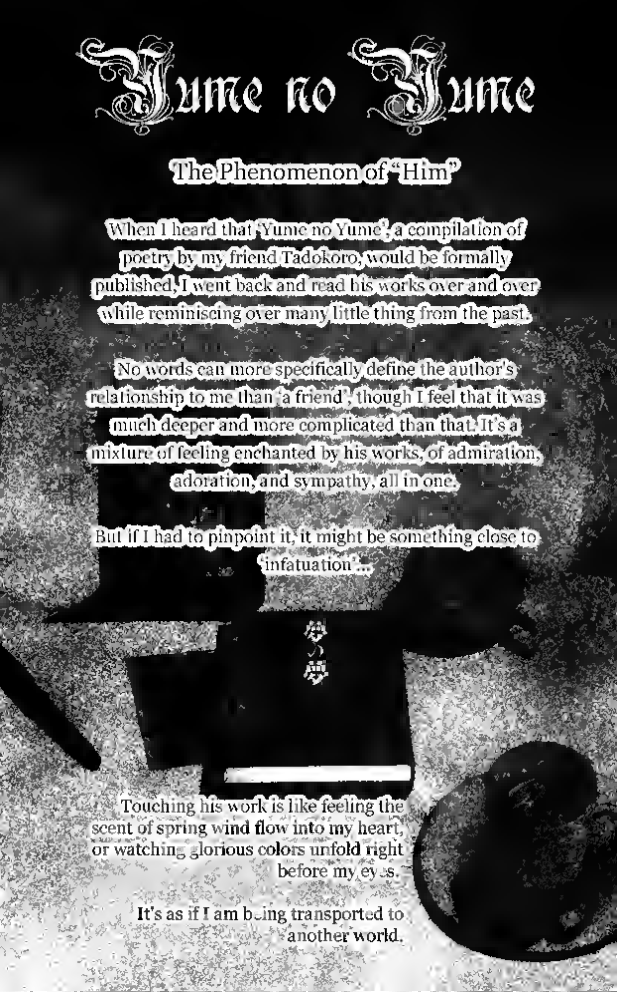
Yume no Yume

The Phenomenon of "Him"

When I heard that 'Yume no Yume', a compilation of poetry by my friend Tadokoro, would be formally published, I went back and read his works over and over while reminiscing over many little thing from the past.

No words can more specifically define the author's relationship to me than 'a friend', though I feel that it was much deeper and more complicated than that. It's a mixture of feeling enchanted by his works, of admiration, adoration, and sympathy, all in one.

But if I had to pinpoint it, it might be something close to 'infatuation'...



Touching his work is like feeling the scent of spring wind flow into my heart, or watching glorious colors unfold right before my eyes.

It's as if I am being transported to another world.

I met Tadokoro when I entered highschool...
My name is Kyumonji Manabu. I lived in my father's house in the countryside with my sister until I finished highschool. Because of work, my parents were almost never home.
My name is Kyumonji Manabu.
Yume no Yume
The Phenomenon of "Him"

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Jump
Sight
Thump
Thump
run
Blush!!
Hmph
glance
ENERGY IS THE FORCE THAT MOVES MASS.
WE ALL KNOW THAT
ALL RIGHT, TODAY WE'LL APPROACH THE SUBJECT OF AN OBJECT'S ENERGY!
THIS INCIDENT WAS MY INTRODUCTION TO THE EXISTENCE OF TAOKORO SOU, THOUGH HE HAD ACTUALLY BEEN IN THE SAME CLASS AS ME FROM THE START

Blush!!
Blush!!
glance
NO! TADOKORO, DON'T...
WE CAN SEE THAT THERE IS A CONNECTION BETWEEN DISTANCE AND SPEED.
DUN
I HAVEN'T ASKED ANY.
I DIDN'T HEAR THE QUEST! ON.
CLATTER
Y-YES!
KYUM ONJI.
UHH... I'M SORRY!
NIICHAN SAYA CAME TO SEE YOU
HI!
HELLO, YUU-NIISAN
I'M HOME!
HELLO!
SAYA'S HERE...?
SORRY FOR INTER-RUPT-ING!
YOU SEEM STRANGE TODAY...
EH?!
NOTH-ING'S WRONG!
MANABU, WHAT HAPPENED IN YOUR PHYSICS CLASS?
I GOT LAUGHED AT SO WHAT?
AH

Sayako's family tended the land and lived on it as tenants. They were, in other words, a part of our household.

My father's family had lived here for generations. He owned vast areas of land around here.

She was always coming over to play and eat with us

WH-

nudge nudge

WHAT?

And was a big help in collecting Tadokoro's poems for the compilation.

She would later become my wife

I PERSONALLY DON'T SEE ANY EVENT IN THE HISTORY OF MANKIND MORE AMAZING AND SIGNIFICANT THAN THIS ONE.

APOLLO 11 LANDING ON THE MOON WAS A PHENOMENAL POINT IN THE HISTORY OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION.

SO 1969 IS REMEMBERED AS THE FIRST YEAR THAT HUMANS WALKED ON ANOTHER SURFACE BESIDES EARTH

BUT WE HAVE WORLD HISTORY TODAY!

MY GOODNESS

AHEM

YOU'RE BURNING UP!

COUGH

ARE YOU OKAY, YOUNG MASTER?

COUGH

SHOULDN'T YOU STAY HOME TODAY?

Sometimes he talked to us about things outside of the textbook, but the topics were all interesting and thought-provoking

Ever since highschool, I had the greatest respect for the World History teacher, Kusakabe-sensei.

In those days, entrance examinations weren't so competitive. An average guy from the countryside still stood a chance.

TODAY WE'LL DISCUSS HUMAN CIVILIZATION FROM THE TIME WHEN STARS WERE GODS, THROUGH THE PRESENT DAY WHEN MEN TRAVEL TO OUTER SPACE

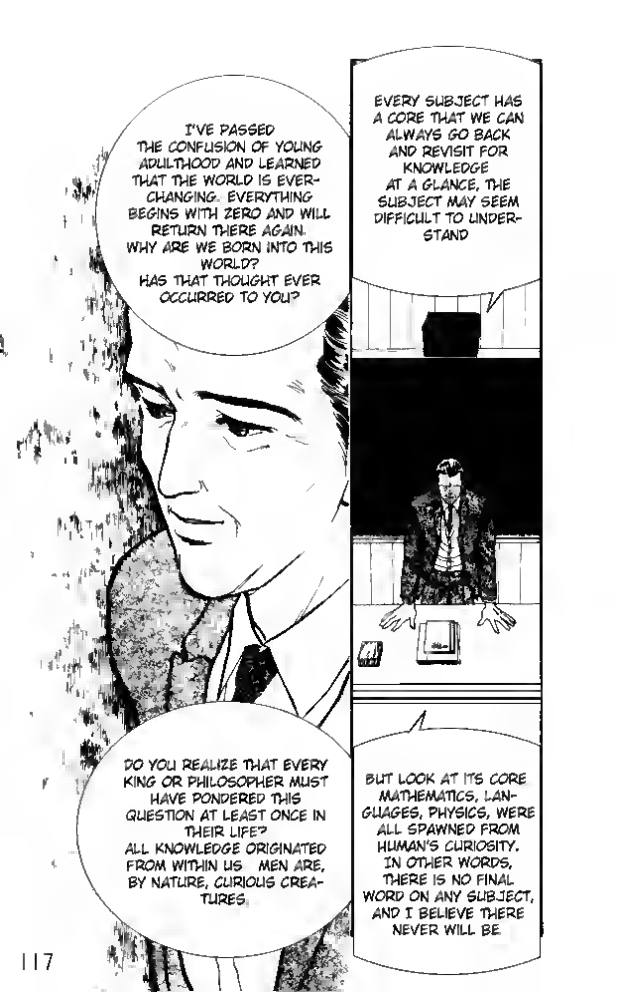
THE GROWTH OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION MAY SEEM LIKE A SERIES OF DESTRUCTION OF ANCIENT MYTHOLOGICAL FANTASIES... BUT IN REALITY, THE RECORD OF HUMAN INTELLIGENCE AND HUMANITY'S ATTEMPT TO INVENT AND SEARCH FOR THE TRUTHS OF THE UNIVERSE IS ALSO A MYTH.

FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, MAN HAD REGARDED THE SKY AS THE HOLY PLACE WHERE GODS DWELLED, AND THE MOON WAS ASSOCIATED WITH NUMEROUS DEITIES

BUT ON THAT DAY, HUMANITY FELT ALMOST AS THOUGH THEY WERE WALKING RIGHT BESIDE GOD.

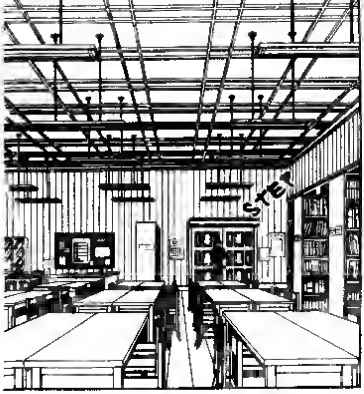
He sometimes brought in military records and wartime stories. Even students who hated history were charmed by his unconventional teaching methods

His classes were always fun and he was very informal with the students during discussions


I'VE PASSED THE CONFUSION OF YOUNG ADULTHOOD AND LEARNED THAT THE WORLD IS EVER-CHANGING. EVERYTHING BEGINS WITH ZERO AND WILL RETURN THERE AGAIN. WHY ARE WE BORN INTO THIS WORLD? HAS THAT THOUGHT EVER OCCURRED TO YOU?
EVERY SUBJECT HAS A CORE THAT WE CAN ALWAYS GO BACK AND REVISIT FOR KNOWLEDGE AT A GLANCE, THE SUBJECT MAY SEEM DIFFICULT TO UNDER-STAND
DO YOU REALIZE THAT EVERY KING OR PHILOSOPHER MUST HAVE PONDERED THIS QUESTION AT LEAST ONCE IN THEIR LIFE? ALL KNOWLEDGE ORIGINATED FROM WITHIN US. MEN ARE, BY NATURE, CURIOUS CREA-TURES.
BUT LOOK AT IT'S CORE MATHEMATICS, LAN-GUAGES, PHYSICS, WERE ALL SPAWNED FROM HUMAN'S CURIOSITY. IN OTHER WORDS, THERE IS NO FINAL WORD ON ANY SUBJECT, AND I BELIEVE THERE NEVER WILL BE.

YES MA'AM
YOU'D BETTER GO BACK HOME AND REST
OH, YOU HAVE A FEVER
Damn it! I didn't want to miss any of Kusakabe-sensei's class
STAGGER
SOMEONE PLEASE TAKE HIM TO THE INFIRMARY
KYUMONJI, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'M FINE, EXCUSE ME.
HISTORY IS THE STUDY OF CIVILIZATIONS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD...
Cough! cough
chatter
chatter
YEAH
AH
IS THAT SO...?
DEPRESSED
YEAH
cough
GOING HOME, KYUMONJI?
cough cough
TAKE CARE!
HEY...
cough
I CAN'T STAND HIS TEACHING
DON'T YOU THINK HE TEACHES LIKE A DRUNKARD?
WHAT? YOU LIKE KUSAKABE'S CLASS THAT MUCH?
IT WAS SO MUCH FUN!
HOW WAS THE REST OF CLASS TODAY?
TOO BAD YOU DIDN'T GET TO STAY TILL THE END
Yeah

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM? IF YOU DON'T LIKE SENSEI'S CLASS, JUST DON'T SHOW UP!
ANYONE WOULD BE
ANGRY?
cough
cough
cough
WHAT?! TADOKORO!
WATCH YOUR MOUTH
chirp
chirp
chirp
RATTLE
I WONDER IF KUSAKABE-SENSEI IS HERE YET...
creak
creak
TAKE CARE
Ah,
THANKS
IDIOT! I DIDN'T SAY THAT.
HEY!
Now you're calling me an idiot?



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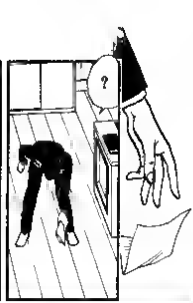
Clear sparkling crystals shine on the waters surface on a lonesome evening.
A POEM?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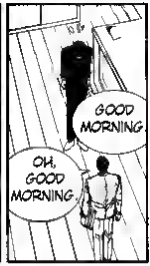

GOOD MORNING
OH, GOOD MORNING

click
AH

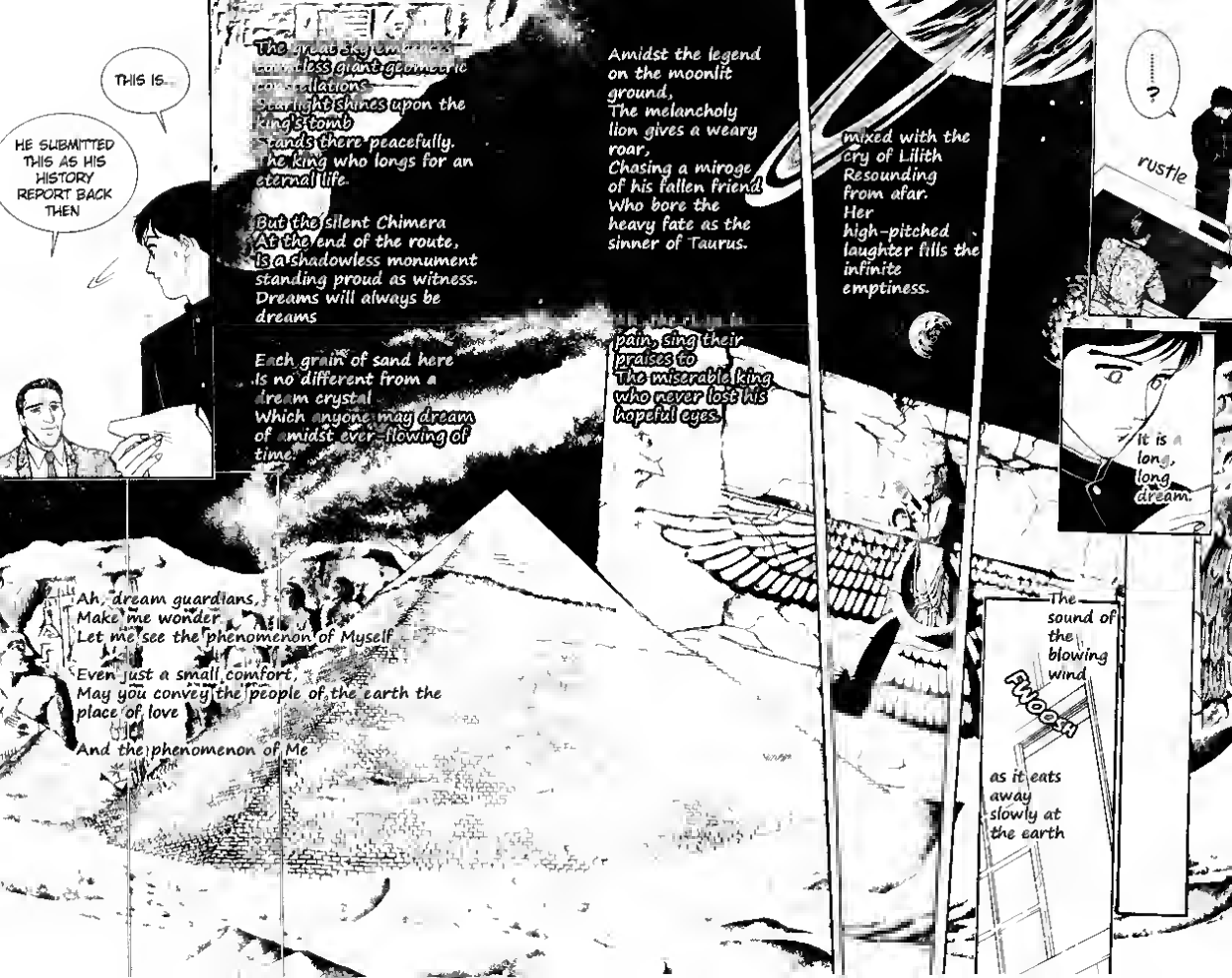
EH?
MAY I HAVE THAT PAPER BACK?

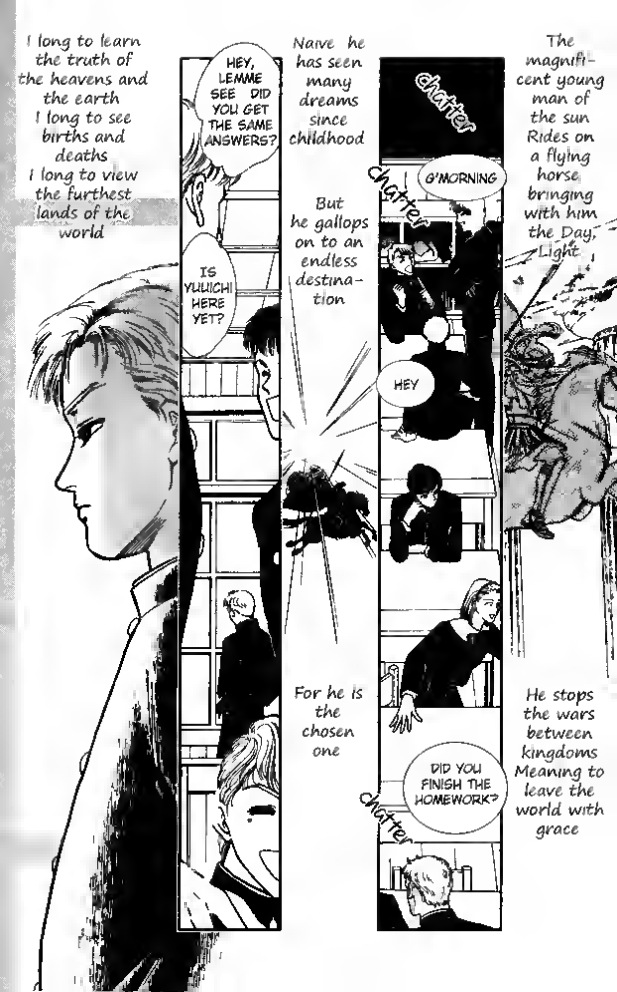
UMM... I. YESTERDAY I WAS SICK AND HAD TO LEAVE THE CLASS EARLY SO I DIDN'T GET TO HEAR THE WHOLE LECTURE. I WONDERED IF YOU COULD GO OVER IT AGAIN WITH ME... EH HEH
NO PROBLEM.

Moonbeams through the jungle, calling out the creatures of the night.
A peaceful scene underlined with hidden sadness.
Tomorrow shall wipe them all away.
"Moon Crystal"

SO, HOW WAS IT?
NOT BAD, HUH?
HA HA, NO, NO.
NOTHING LIKE
YEAH. ER... WAS IT SOMETHING I SHOULDN'T HAVE SEEN, SENSEI?
DID YOU READ IT?
AH! OH, I'M SORRY. THE WIND BLEW IT...
COULD IT BE THAT TADOKORO
him?
ONCE IN A WHILE, I FIND ONE ON MY DESK. SOMEONE LEAVES THEM THERE BEFORE I ARRIVE.
AS ALWAYS, WITHOUT A NAME
WHOSE IS IT?
EH? UMM... I GUESS
AH!
chuckle
NO, IT MADE ME HAPPY... THAT I'VE FOUND ANOTHER FRIEND WHO CAN UNDERSTAND AND RELATE TO MY
OOPS
SORRY WAS THAT A BAD THING, SENSEI?
ACTUALLY, EVEN THOUGH HE DIDN'T LEAVE A NAME, I HAVE AN IDEA WHO WROTE THIS. YOU DO TOO, DON'T YOU?

AND HE'S GOT SOME GUTS BAD-MOUTHING SENSEI!
I CAN'T STAND HIS TEACHING
"HE "
SO IT'S REALLY
THE FIRST TIME I READ ONE OF HIS POEMS, I INSTANTLY BECAME AN ADMIRER.
VERY MUCH!
YES!
WHOA SENSEI IS GOING TO GIVE ME A ONE-ON-ONE LECTURE
OH, KYUMONJI, YOU'RE INTERESTED IN MIDDLE EASTERN CIVILIZATION TOO, AREN'T YOU?
THAT IDIOT TADOKORO ..?!
blush
THANK YOU, SIR
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, BEING PRAISED OPENLY LIKE THIS
WHEN I FIRST CAME HERE TO TEACH, I HAD NO IDEA HOW WORLD HISTORY CLASS WOULD BE PERCEIVED BY THE STUDENTS SO TO GAUGE WHETHER YOU GUYS HAD ANY INTEREST IN HISTORY, I HAD EACH STUDENT WRITE A REPORT ON THE SUBJECT HE FOUND MOST INTRIGUING
YES
AND THE REPORT YOU WROTE WAS INDEED VERY ENTERTAINING
OH, WHY DON'T YOU READ THIS ONE TOO ...?
HE MADE A FOOL OF ME
BUT I THOUGHT IT A SHAME THAT I WAS THE ONLY TO HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF READING THEM IT WAS FRUSTRATING TO HAVE TO KEEP THIS A SECRET AND NOT BE ABLE TO TELL A SOUL.


THIS IS...
HE SUBMITTED THIS AS HIS HISTORY REPORT BACK THEN
The great sky [illegible] boundless giant geometric [illegible] formulations
Searchlight shines upon the king's tomb
Stands there peacefully.
The king who longs for an eternal life.
But the silent Chimera
At the end of the route,
Is a shadowless monument standing proud as witness.
Dreams will always be dreams
Each grain of sand here
Is no different from a dream crystal
Which anyone may dream of amidst ever-flowing of time.
Amidst the legend on the moonlit ground,
The melancholy lion gives a weary roar,
Chasing a miroge of his fallen friend
Who bore the heavy fate as the sinner of Taurus.
mixed with the cry of Lilith
Resounding from afar.
Her high-pitched laughter fills the infinite emptiness.
pain, sing their praises to
The miserable king who never lost his hopeful eyes.
?
rustle
It is a long, long dream.
Ah, dream guardians,
Make me wonder
Let me see the phenomenon of Myself
Even just a small comfort,
May you convey the people of the earth the place of love
And the phenomenon of Me
The sound of the blowing wind
FWOOSH
as it eats away slowly at the earth


I long to learn the truth of the heavens and the earth
I long to see births and deaths
I long to view the furthest lands of the world
HEY, LEMME SEE DID YOU GET THE SAME ANSWERS?
IS YUUICHI HERE YET?
Naive he has seen many dreams since childhood
But he gallops on to an endless destination
For he is the chosen one
chatter
G'MORNING
HEY
DID YOU FINISH THE HOMEWORK?
The magnificent young man of the sun Rides on a flying horse bringing with him the Day, Light
He stops the wars between kingdoms Meaning to leave the world with grace

From that day on, I felt that he has transformed into significant person, no longer merely a classmate.
He who seemed like an ordinary young man at a glance.
Now appeared to have fire and ice bottled inside him, more than any ordinary person, likely to explode one day.

The water flows forever

Countless skeletons of ancient beasts lie scattered in the tender soil of the earth, Slowly sprouting and sinking slowly, Endlessly,

Beneath the current of the majestic moonlight

NIICHAN, MOM AND DAD MAILED US PACKAGES.
THERE'S SOME FOR SAYA'S FAMILY TOO.
I'M OFF, BYE...
BUT I'M GOING OUT WITH MY FRIENDS!
It's 40 minutes by bus!
DO YOU EXPECT ME TO TAKE ALL THIS TO THEM?
WHAT IS IT?
WAIT UP
ER, WAIT...
THAT'S ALL
WELL THEN, SEE YOU LATER --
OH, SORRY TO ALWAYS TROUBLE YOU!
HE SEEMS PRETTY POPULAR, HUH?
MY FRIENDS ARE ALWAYS RAVING ABOUT HIM
I ONLY HEARD OF HIM BUT I THINK HE LIVES IN THE HOUSE JUST OVER THERE
RIGHT?
SO WHAT?
I HEARD THERE'S A GUY NAMED TADOKORO IN YOUR CLASS
YES.
WHY DON'T YOU COME IN FOR A LITTLE BIT? I'LL MAKE TEA

STOP IT
NO, TADOKORO
JEEZ
SO SAYA THINKS ABOUT GUYS LIKE THAT TOO.
NO.
BY
HEY, WHAT'S WITH THAT ATTITUDE?
UNORDINARY, I GUESS...
HUH?
ARE YOU CLOSE TO HIM?
SO WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS HE?
IS HE REALLY SUCH AN IDOL AMONG YOU GIRLS?!
WHAT KIND OF PERSON ...?
glance
glance
HE LIVES AROUND HERE?
crash
KYAAAH!
WHAT THE HELL?
SHUT UP! A CHILD HAS NO RIGHT TO PREACH AN ADULT!
LET HIM GO, DEAR!
AH!
TADOKORO
D
WELL, IT'S ANOTHER HALF HOUR BEFORE THE NEXT BUS ARRIVES I MIGHT AS WELL KILL SOME TIME
Making excuses.
tap
tap
AK!
WHAT THE HECK AM I DOING?
WHY AM I WALKING TOWARD TADOKORO'S HOUSE?!

MIKIKO, YOU'D BETTER FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO WITH THAT GOOD-FOR-NOTHING CHILD OF YOURS!
STOP IT, OUCH!
IT'S TADOKORO'S VOICE...
IF YOU THINK YOU'RE SO MUCH BETTER'N US, JUST LEAVE.
SLAM
.....
WAIT!
MIKIKO, I'M THROUGH WITH YOU! A HOME ISN'T HOME WITH THAT WRETCHED CHILD AROUND YOU!
DARLING ...
WHAT?! WHY ARE YOU HERE?
COOL DOWN. I WAS JUST PASSING BY...
HEY, TADOKORO!
I BEG YOU. PLEASE FORGIVE HIM.
SHUT UP!
PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME...
TADOKORO
PASSING BY, MY ASS...!
HMPH!
OUCH ...
AH, HEY!

...WE'RE NOT LIKE THAT...
IS YOUR GIRL-FRIEND RIGHT IN THE HEAD?
BUT SHE HAS BEEN PRETTY STRANGE TODAY.
LOOK, MANABU. TADOKORO'S WRISTS ARE PURE WHITE! ♡
STOP IT, SAYA. DON'T BE SILLY.
YOU GUYS ARE WEIRD.
HEY, HEY, SAYA!
OH, SO YOU'RE TADOKORO.
WHAT?
WHAT HAPPENED?
DID YOU GUYS FIGHT?
NO, SOMETHING JUST CAME UP. DON'T
WH-IT WAS THAT?
giggle
I SEE.
HOW CAN I GO BACK TO THAT DAMNED HOUSE?
HEY, AREN'T YOU GOING HOME?
WHOA --
YOU MUST BE RICH!
IF YOU DON'T MIND, THAT IS
DO YOU WANT TO GO TO MY HOUS
Hm
OH ...
IT'S ALWAYS LIKE THIS
DON'T WORRY.

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Ah, Yuuichi? Okay okay!
I'll see you in school tomorrow!
GO AHEAD, TADOKORO. MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME
THANKS
YOUNG MASTER, YOU'VE GOT A PHONE CALL.
clunk
FWIP
Hmm?
clack
OH, SAKI-SAN, IS THAT GOING TO MY ROOM?
YES.
I'LL TAKE IT
YOU'RE ... QUITE A READER, AREN'T YOU?

BUT WHEN I STARTED READING, I REALIZED IT'S NOT BAD. PRETTY INTERESTING, IN FACT.
IF YOU LIKE IT, I'LL LEND YOU THE BOOK.
MY FATHER PREFERS THE WORKS OF FOREIGN POETS LIKE RIMBAUD** AND BAUDELAIRE***. ESPECIALLY LIEDAI BIN'S TRANSLATIONS
HE HAS A FULL COLLECTION OF THEM
AT FIRST I ALSO BELIEVED POETRY WAS ONLY FOR GIRLS...
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I HAVE NO INTEREST IN POEMS. THAT STUFF'S FOR GIRLS
EH ?!
WERE YOU LOOKING AT THE POEM COMPILATIONS?
IS... IS THAT SO?
I LIKE NISHIWAKI JUNZABUROU* A LOT.
HOW DID YOU ...?!
YOU MUST BE A FAN OF SAIJOU YASOU'S** WORKS!
BECAUSE SAIJOU YASOU'S POEM BOOK WAS PUT BACK UPSIDE-DOWN.
You were in a hurry?

T/N: * Nishiwaki Junzaburou was a contemporary Japanese poet famous for his surrealist works in Showa era.
** Saijou Yasou (Saijo Yaso) was a Japanese poet famous for writing children's songs and nursery rhymes.
*** Jean Nicolas Arthur Rimbaud was a French poet. As part of the decadent movement, his influence on modern literature, music and art has been enduring and pervasive. Victor Hugo describe him at the time as "an infant Shakespeare"
**** Charles Pierre Baudelaire was a nineteenth century French poet.

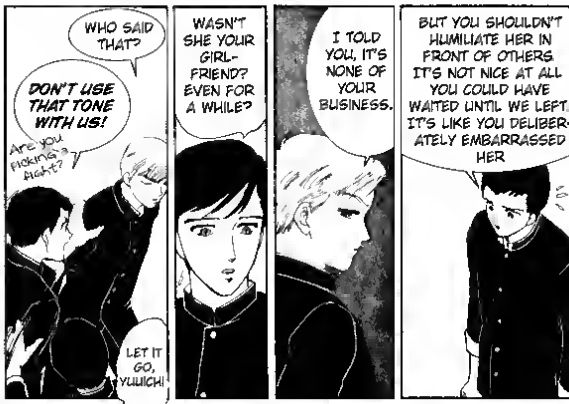
LOOK, MANABU
TADOKORO'S WRISTS ARE PURE WHITE!
squeak
EH?
AH... SORRY
YOU'RE STILL UP?
CAN'T SLEEP?
NO
Bwoooooo
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. JUST READ AS MUCH AS YOU LIKE.
GOOD NIGHT.
HMM... GOOD NIGHT.
clatter
clatter
clatter

IF YOU DON'T LOOK CLOSELY, YOU MIGHT MISTAKE HIM FOR A GIRL
YES HIS SKIN IS REALLY PALE AND SMOOTH
AH
WHAT THE HECK AM I THINKING?
TH-THAT'S NO GOOD
click
chirp
chirp
HELLO
HOW ARE YOU TODAY?
GOOD MORNING, SENSEI.
He was still cold and aloof, with a come-what-may attitude
For a simple-minded person like me to become his best friend was quite a difficult task.
After that incident,
His behavior at school remained exactly the same.

SORRY TO MAKE YOU WAIT.
HEH HEH.
IT'S JUST A MINOR TOURNAMENT, ANYWAY.
'S ALRIGHT. IT'S PRETTY COOL THAT YOU GOT A START-UP POSITION AS A FIRST YEAR.
SURE!
GO AHEAD.
AND IF YOU DON'T MIND HIS POEMS AND REPORTS
MAY I MAKE A COPY OF THEM TOO?
IS THERE A NEW POEM?
OHH
YOU WANT TO SEE IT?
YES!
THAT GIRL FROM BEFORE
PLEASE...
EH? THAT'S...

ENOUGH! I TOLD YOU, I'M NOT INTERESTED ANYMORE.
HEY, TADOKORO
WHY DO I ALWAYS WALK INTO SCENES LIKE THIS?
What's the matter, Manabu?
WAIT

YUUICHI
THAT'S NOT A NICE WAY TO TREAT A GIRL
AND HOW DOES THAT CONCERN YOU, ORIHARA? MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS
WHY DID YOU
WHAT ...?
patter patter
walk
HOLD ON, TADOKORO
YOU THAT'S SO MEAN!
YOU'RE TOO PERSISTENT
BYE


WHO SAID THAT?
DON'T USE THAT TONE WITH US!
Are you picking a fight?
LET IT GO, YUUICHI
WASN'T SHE YOUR GIRL-FRIEND? EVEN FOR A WHILE?
I TOLD YOU, IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
BUT YOU SHOULDN'T HUMILIATE HER IN FRONT OF OTHERS. IT'S NOT NICE AT ALL. YOU COULD HAVE WAITED UNTIL WE LEFT. IT'S LIKE YOU DELIBERATELY EMBARRASSED HER

LET'S GO, YUUICHI!
HOLD ON, MANABU. THIS GUY IS JUST ASKING TO BE HIT!
IF YOU DON'T LIKE HER, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE GONE OUT WITH HER. I HATE THAT KIND OF PERSON THAT MOST!

LOOK AT ME. I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO CONFESS TO SAYA I'M SO AFRAID SHE'LL REJECT ME AND I DON'T WANT TO BE LAUGHED AT
What a loser I am! I have no confidence at all!
That's not right
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT HE DIDN'T HAVE ANY FEELING FOR HER AT ALL

You're a karate athlete. You can't hit him!
But he..!

AW, MANABU, YOU MUST BE KIDDING
ERM SAYA, I... I LIKE...
pppt!
ARGH I CAN JUST IMAGINE HOW SHE'LL REACT! I DON'T HAVE THE HEART TO CONFESS!
Youre a master

WELL, I'LL JUST BRING THESE TO HER HOUSE LIKE USUAL
AND TAKE THE CHANCE TO CONFESS TO HER!!

ARE YOU MOCKING ME?
A date? Hmph!
You're kinda grumpy lately. Where did you get that?

WHAT, KASUMI? I HAVE TO GO AGAIN?
WELL, I HAVE A DATE ♡
BESIDES, YOU HAVE NOTHING BETTER TO DO

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WHAT WERE YOU TWO TALKING ABOUT?
HMPH
JEALOUS
ANSWER MY QUESTION.
YOU, OF COURSE
EH, ?
ABOUT ME?
YOU READ MY POEMS, DIDN'T YOU?
SORRY
HN
THAT'S ALRIGHT SENSEI GAVE THEM TO YOU HIMSELF
KYUMONJI, CAN I GO TO YOUR HOUSE AGAIN?
EH? OH... SURE

I CAN'T GO HOME TODAY
THAT WOMAN AND HER NEW GUY ARE IN A CRITICAL PHASE AGAIN
SHE WOULD SLEEP WITH EVERYTHING IN SIGHT EVEN BEFORE SHE HAD ME DISGUSTING WHORE...
"THAT WOMAN"
THE WOMAN WHO GAVE BIRTH TO ME
HIS MOM ?!
WHAT ELSE SHOULD I CALL HER?
HOW COULD YOU SPEAK THAT WAY OF YOUR OWN MOM?
FINE.
JUST FORGET THAT WOMAN
THERE ARE TIMES I WONDER WHAT WOMEN THINK
FOR ME, THEY SEEM LIKE CREATURES WITH AN EMPTY BRAIN
I DON'T KNOW WHY I DIDN'T CONTRADICT HIM
SOMETIMES, HE SEEMED TO LOOK AT PEOPLE WITH SUCH CYNICAL EYES
IT MADE ME A BIT UNCOMFORTABLE...
BUT SAYA IS A GOOD WOMAN
JUMP

I WAS KIDDING! DON'T BE A SPOIL-SPORT!!
GAH!
YOU--!
THOUGH IT'S FUN MESSING WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S GIRL-FRIENDS
WHACK
STOP MAKING THAT FACE THERE IS NOTHING BETWEEN US
AND I DON'T WANT TO GET BEAT BY ORIHARA
Agitated
HEY, MANA...
YUU-CHI!
I'M HOME.
YOUNG MASTER, YOUR FRIEND IS HERE.
ORI-HARA.
I'LL APOL-OGIZE TO HER NEXT TIME.
I KNOW I WAS WRONG, THE OTHER DAY.
DON'T LEAVE.
EH?!
BYE.

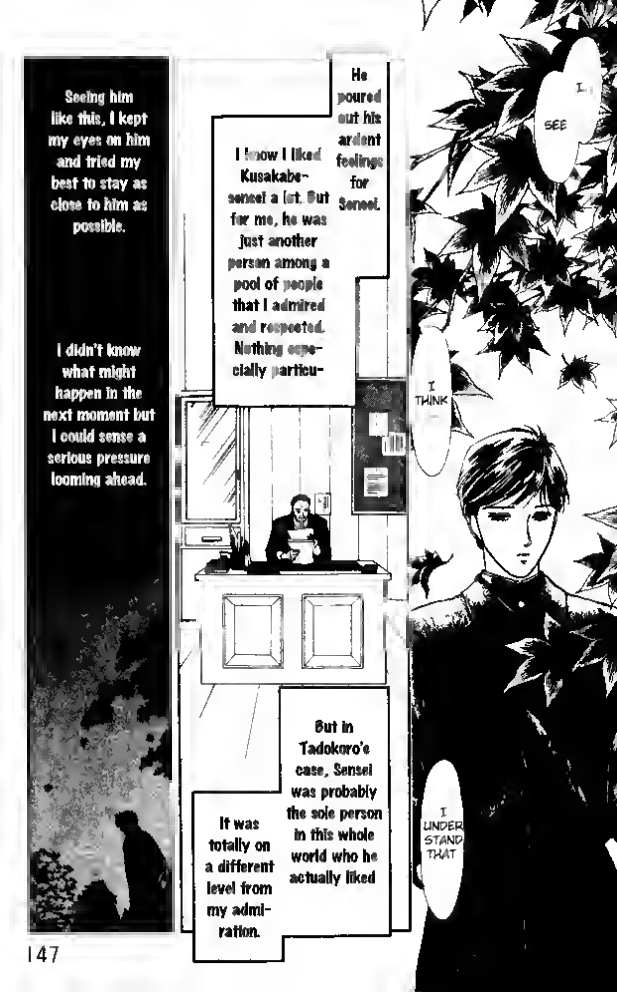
I'M GOING HOME
I SEE YOU
OKAY TAKE CARE ON YOUR WAY HOME.
THAT SHOULD SETTLE IT. RIGHT?
HAH? WELL, IF YOU REALLY REGRET IT...
WHOSE BOOK ARE YOU READING?
VERLAINE
(T/N * Paul Marie Verlaine was a French poet associated with the Symbolist movement. He is considered one of the greatest representatives of French poetry.)
After that, he often came by to stay over at my house.
Though he lived his days without getting close to any of his highschool classmates.

splash
splash
AWE-SOME!
THE STORM IS MAKING THE SEA GOES WILD
ARE YOU SURE ?
splat
splat
THAT PLAN OF YOURS TO RUN AWAY FROM HOME
THAT WOMAN,
SEEMS SHE GAVE UP PAYING MY TUITION TOO MUCH TROUBLE FOR HER, I GUESS
NO WAY AM I GOING TO STAY IN THAT WRETCHED HOUSE FOREVER THOUGH
I'LL WAIT UNTIL I'M IN 2ND YEAR
BE CAREFUL
splash
THUMP
I SEE
FWISH
AND I DON'T WANT TO BE SOMEONE S BURDEN ANY LONGER.

WingTiPete*com

Whew!
WELL, HOW ABOUT
IF YOU REALLY PLAN TO LEAVE HOME
HEY, NOT AT ALL I DON'T MIND
splash
I WON'T HAVE TO KEEP BOTHERING YOU
AT YOUR HOUSE EITHER
Whoom
IF I LEAVE THAT HOUSE
HEY, YOU GOT IT ALL WRONG!
THEN WHAT SHOULD I THINK?
MANABU I KEEP GETTING THIS FEELING
HN?
I THINK YOU TREAT ME LIKE A GIRL
JUST COME OVER AND STAY AT MY HOUSE FOR REAL
ALWAYS BLURTING OUT WORDS WITHOUT THINKING
snicker
THAT'S A RICH BOY TALKING
I don't need help with every little thing
Dejected
Ah!
splash
WE'D BETTER GO HOME
YEAH
OR SHOULD I SAY NAIVE TO THE WORLD?
Aok
Shiver shiver

I REALLY FEEL THAT IT'S A SHAME
THAT THE TWO OF US ARE THE ONLY ONES TO READ THESE
YES, I AGREE
SENSEI SAID SO HIMSELF
HE MUST THINK YOU'RE VERY TALENTED.
BUT
FOR ME IT'S USELESS
BECAUSE I DON'T WANT ANYONE ELSE BUT SENSEI TO READ THEM.
THOUGH I'LL PROBABLY, SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE, MEET ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE AND ENCOUNTER SOMEONE I LIKE AND ADMIRE
I DON'T THINK I'LL MEET ANY ONE THAT I LIKE BETTER THAN SENSEI EVER AGAIN


Seeing him like this, I kept my eyes on him and tried my best to stay as close to him as possible.
I didn't know what might happen in the next moment but I could sense a serious pressure looming ahead.
He poured out his ardent feelings for Sensei.
I know I liked Kusakabe-sensei a lot. But for me, he was just another person among a pool of people that I admired and respected. Nothing especially particu-
It was totally on a different level from my admiration.
But in Tadokoro's case, Sensei was probably the sole person in this whole world who he actually liked
I SEE
I THINK
I UNDERSTAND THAT

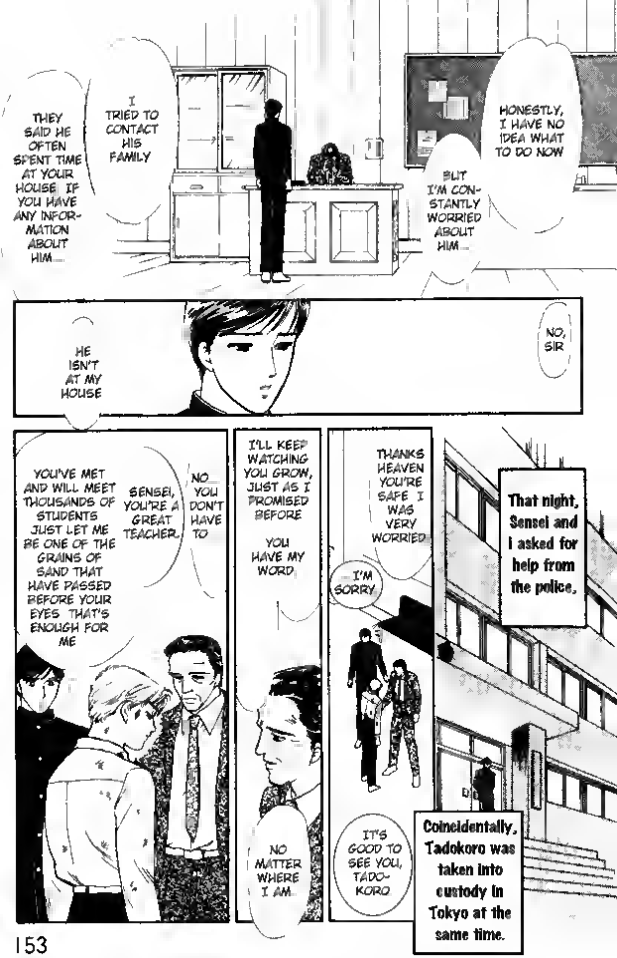
tap
tap
tap
HEY, HAVE YOU GUYS HEARD IT?
BAD NEWS!
WE'LL BE LONELY
THE 3RD YEAR STUDENTS WON'T BE COMING TO SCHOOL ANYMORE
YEAH, IT'S SAD
What?!
KUSAKABE-SENSEI MIGHT BE MOVING TO ANOTHER SCHOOL!
And as the first year of high-school life was coming to an end...
chatter
chatter
IS IT TRUE?
I HAVE NO IDEA.
HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?!
Hey
Hey
IT'S GOTTA BE A JOKE!

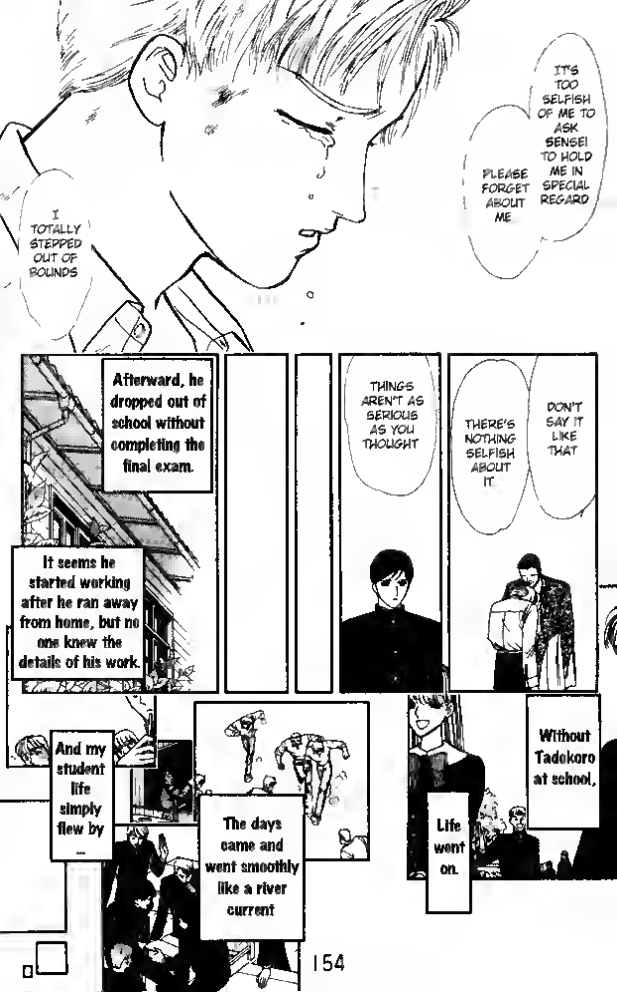
chatter
chatter
chatter

After that, he didn't come to school for days.
Good morning, sensei!
Stand!
The rumor about Kusakabe-sensei moving to another school was true.
chatter
KYUMONJI... COME SEE ME IN LIBRARY AFTER THIS
YES, SIR
IT MUST BE ABOUT TADOKORO
DO YOU KNOW WHERE TADO-KORO IS?
NO, SIR
I JUST WENT TO ASK FOR HIM AT HIS HOUSE YESTER-DAY
clock
EXCUSE ME, SIR
IT'S BEEN 4 DAYS BUT HIS MOTHER DIDN'T BOTHER TO NOTIFY THE POLICE OR MAKE ANY ATTEMPT TO LOOK FOR HIM
SHE SAID TADO-KORO'S RUNNING AWAY FROM HOME IS NOTHING UNORDI-NARY
WELL LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED THE OTHER NIGHT...

He was standing in the rain in front of my house.
TADO-KO-RO.
SEN-SEI
IS IT TRUE THAT YOU'LL MOVE TO ANOTHER SCHOOL?
NEVER MIND THAT RIGHT NOW WHY ARE YOU...
IS IT TRUE?!
PLEASE DON'T GO
TADO-KORO

PLEASE DON'T GO, SENSEI.
BUT IT WASN'T
MY DECI-SION TO MAKE
IF SENSEI WON'T BE THERE ANYMORE, I'LL LEAVE SCHOOL TOO!
I'LL QUIT!
AH... TADO-KORO,
WAIT ...!
TADO-KORO !


THEY SAID HE OFTEN SPENT TIME AT YOUR HOUSE. IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT HIM...
I TRIED TO CONTACT HIS FAMILY
HONESTLY, I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT TO DO NOW
BUT I'M CONSTANTLY WORRIED ABOUT HIM...
HE ISN'T AT MY HOUSE
NO, SIR
YOU'VE MET AND WILL MEET THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS. JUST LET ME BE ONE OF THE GRAINS OF SAND THAT HAVE PASSED BEFORE YOUR EYES. THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ME
SENSEI, YOU'RE A GREAT TEACHER.
NO... YOU DON'T HAVE TO
I'LL KEEP WATCHING YOU GROW, JUST AS I PROMISED BEFORE
YOU HAVE MY WORD.
NO MATTER WHERE I AM.
THANKS HEAVEN YOU'RE SAFE. I WAS VERY WORRIED.
I'M SORRY.
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, TADOKORO
That night, Sensei and I asked for help from the police.
Coincidentally, Tadokoro was taken into custody in Tokyo at the same time.


I TOTALLY STEPPED OUT OF BOUNDS
PLEASE FORGET ABOUT ME
IT'S TOO SELFISH OF ME TO ASK SENSEI TO HOLD ME IN SPECIAL REGARD
Afterward, he dropped out of school without completing the final exam.
It seems he started working after he ran away from home, but no one knew the details of his work.
THINGS AREN'T AS SERIOUS AS YOU THOUGHT
THERE'S NOTHING SELFISH ABOUT IT
DON'T SAY IT LIKE THAT
And my student life simply flew by ...
The days came and went smoothly like a river current
Life went on.
Without Tadokoro at school,

YUUJI CHI!
HI!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING AROUND HERE?
WORK, WHAT ELSE? ARE YOU DOING WELL IN YOUR CLASSES HUH?
EH EH EH
DO YOU HAVE TIME?
LET'S GET A DRINK
clatter
HEY!
HEY. I RAN INTO MATSUMOTO THE OTHER DAY.
HE SAID HE SAW TADOKORO AT A BIG-NAME COFFEE SHOP IN NERIMA
TADO-KORO ?
NERIMA? WHERE EXACTLY IN NERIMA?
YOU... ARE YOU CON-CERNED ABOUT HIM?
Don't tell me you have that kind of prefer-ence.
Come on!
ISN'T THAT MINA-HU?

Time kept moving forward, without lingering for a moment

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珈琲巻族
IT'S BEEN A WHILE.
OH, HE QUIT LAST MONTH.
DOES SOMEONE NAMED TADOKORO WORK HERE?
YOU DIDN'T CONTACT HIM EITHER, RIGHT?
HOW ABOUT SENSEI?
...WELL, YOU JUST DISAPPEARED WITHOUT A TRACE.
MANABU,
HE'S ALWAYS WORRYING ABOUT YOU.
AS YOU JUST SAW, I'M NOW LIVING WITH THAT GIRL
JUST YESTERDAY
WERE YOU THE ONE WHO TOLD SENSEI I WAS HERE?
DID HE COME TO SEE YOU?
WHAT A PAIN. YOU HUNTED ME DOWN AT MY HOUSE.
YOU DON'T NEED TO MAKE A FUSS.
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME BEER?
OH, IT'S NOTHING AT ALL
WELL... I'LL MAKE MYSELF SCARCE I'LL GO SHOPPING OR SOMETHING

ARE...
YOU NOT GOING TO STUDY ANYMORE...?
NO
THAT'S ALL I HAVE TO SAY TO YOU NOW LEAVE
!!
TADO KORO
RIGHT NOW I'D RATHER YOU STAY OUT OF MY LIFE!
I'M NOT HAPPY TO SEE YOU
ACTUALLY I'M ONLY ABLE TO GET BY THESE DAYS BECAUSE I'M LIVING OFF HER SALARY
LIKE A PIMP
WHEN?
AFTER I GRADUATE
YES?
LET'S GET MARRIED
SAYA.
OH, SO YOU DID SEE TADOKORO?

Shortly after graduation, I married Sayako just as I said.

And a while later,

I heard that Kunakabe-sensei was admitted into a hospital.

Tadokoro, is this how you feel?

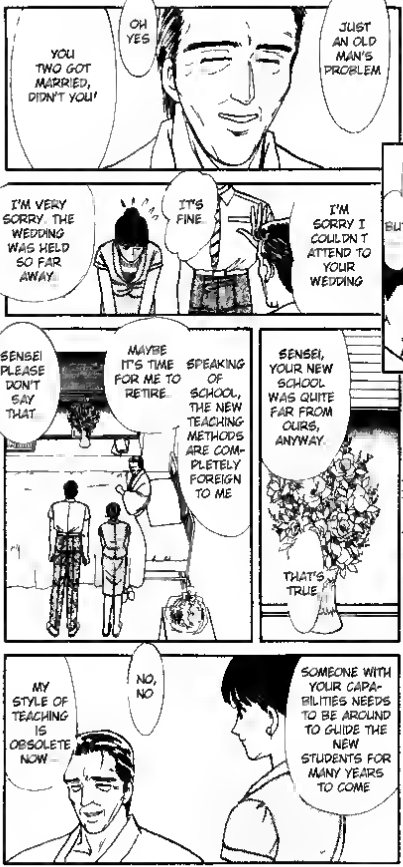
However, there are times when you're holding the one you love,

yet you can't help feeling a sudden pang of loneliness.

MANABU YOU MUST BE VERY LONELY

IT'S OKAY

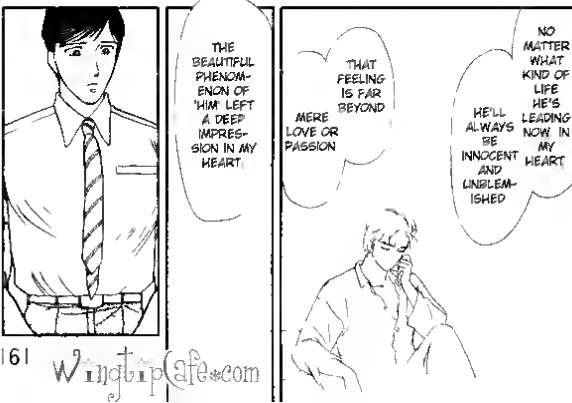
I'LL ALWAYS BE BY YOUR SIDE.


YOU TWO GOT MARRIED, DIDN'T YOU!
OH YES
JUST AN OLD MAN'S PROBLEM
I'M VERY SORRY THE WEDDING WAS HELD SO FAR AWAY
IT'S FINE
I'M SORRY I COULDN'T ATTEND TO YOUR WEDDING
I WAS REALLY CONCERNED, BUT
SORRY TO MAKE YOU GUYS WORRY
SENSEI PLEASE DON'T SAY THAT
MAYBE IT'S TIME FOR ME TO RETIRE
SPEAKING OF SCHOOL, THE NEW TEACHING METHODS ARE COMPLETELY FOREIGN TO ME
SENSEI, YOUR NEW SCHOOL WAS QUITE FAR FROM OURS, ANYWAY
THAT'S TRUE
IT'S NOT AS SERIOUS AS YOU THOUGHT!
IT'S VERY TRIVIAL, NOTHING AT ALL
MY STYLE OF TEACHING IS OBSOLETE NOW
NO, NO
SOMEONE WITH YOUR CAPABILITIES NEEDS TO BE AROUND TO GUIDE THE NEW STUDENTS FOR MANY YEARS TO COME

AND ONE DAY THEY'LL BECOME THE ADULTS OF THEIR OWN ERA
THEY'RE TRYING THEIR BEST TO SHAPE THIS ERA INTO THE PERIOD OF INDIVIDUALISM
AND THESE KIDS WILL BE THE NEXT GENERATION OF OUR SOCIETY
A TEACHER SHOULDN'T BE TOO PASSIONATE ABOUT WHAT HE TEACHES STAYING LESS ATTACHED SEEMS TO BE A BETTER WAY TO APPROACH THE STUDENTS KIDS IN THIS ERA VALUE PRACTICALITY
COLLEAGUE RELATIONSHIPS GET LESS AND LESS FRIENDLY
THE RIVALRY AMONG THE TEACHERS IS FIERCER BY THE MINUTE
WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO HELP ME FIND A PUBLISHER AND AN EDITOR?
I'LL FUND IT MYSELF
BUT I'D LIKE TO PUT TOGETHER A BOOK OF HIS POEMS AND HAVE IT PUBLISHED
HE MAY OR MAY NOT WANT IT
A FOLDER OF THE POEMS I RECEIVED FROM TADOKORO
THIS IS...
AH, WHAT'S THIS NONSENSE I'M BABBLING?!
OH, BUT NOW THAT I HAVE A CHANCE TO MEET YOU AGAIN I'D LIKE YOU TO HAVE THIS
YUSHIE
YUSHIE

WELL, I'LL LEAVE THE FOLDER IN YOUR CARE. YOU MAY LIKE TO GO BACK AND READ THEM FOR THE TIME BEING
YES.
OF COURSE, SENSEI! PLEASE LEAVE IT TO ME.

I'M PROBABLY A BAD TEACHER, SINCE I'VE ALWAYS KEPT HIM IN A SPECIAL PLACE IN MY HEART.
I ALWAYS TRIED TO LOVE ALL OF MY STUDENTS UNCONDITIONALLY WITHOUT A HAVING A FAVORITE OR BEING BIASED
BUT...


THE BEAUTIFUL PHENOM-ENON OF 'HIM' LEFT A DEEP IMPRES-SION IN MY HEART.
THAT FEELING IS FAR BEYOND MERE LOVE OR PASSION
NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF LIFE HE'S LEADING NOW, IN MY HEART HE'LL ALWAYS BE INNOCENT AND UNBLEM-ISHED

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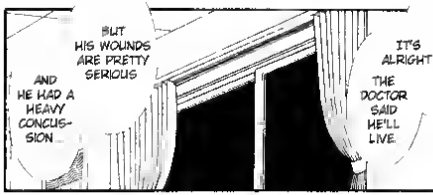
I CAN SAY THAT WHAT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL MOMENT THAT I EVER EXPERIENCE, SINCE I WAS BORN INTO THIS WORLD
AFTERWARD, WE SAT THERE LISTENING TO THE SOUND OF THE WAVES CRASHING SOFTLY AGAINST THE SHORE
FOR A SPLIT SECOND, I SAW HIS FACE CONTORTED AS IF HE WAS ABOUT TO CRY.
"AH, THAT'S TRUE."
"THE STARLIGHT THAT WE ARE WATCHING OVER THERE IT DOESN'T EVEN EXIST IN THAT PLACE ANYMORE."
"WHAT?"
"SENSEI, I DON'T DARE TO BELIEVE IT."
ONE NIGHT DURING THE SUMMER BREAK, HE CALLED ME OUT UNEXPECTEDLY WE SPENT THE WHOLE NIGHT WATCHING THE SEA TOGETHER.

There were many of his students among the people attending the funeral
They were all here to pay their respects to the man they loved, who would never be back to teach again.
I'M GLAD TO BE OF HELP.
MY PLEASURE
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMING
LET'S GO, SAYA
OKAY.
However, Sensei, after passing along the file, didn't wait for me.
Three months went by since I got the folder from sensei, and I spent every day reading those poems over and over

pant
pant
SENSEI WILL BE HAPPY YOU KNOW, HIS THOUGHTS WERE WITH YOU UNTIL THE LAST DAYS OF HIS LIFE
YOU CAME FOR SENSEI'S FUNERAL, DIDN'T YOU?
SHUT UP!
HEY!
slip
SIGH
TADO-KORO!

HE'S NOT DEAD, YOU KNOW!
DON'T SAY THAT! I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT!
AH!
TADOKORO!
WAIT!

SFX: GEYAHAHA!!
SFX: GEGEGE!
UZI


IT'S ALRIGHT
THE DOCTOR SAID HE'LL LIVE.
BUT HIS WOUNDS ARE PRETTY SERIOUS
AND HE HAD A HEAVY CONCUS-SION...

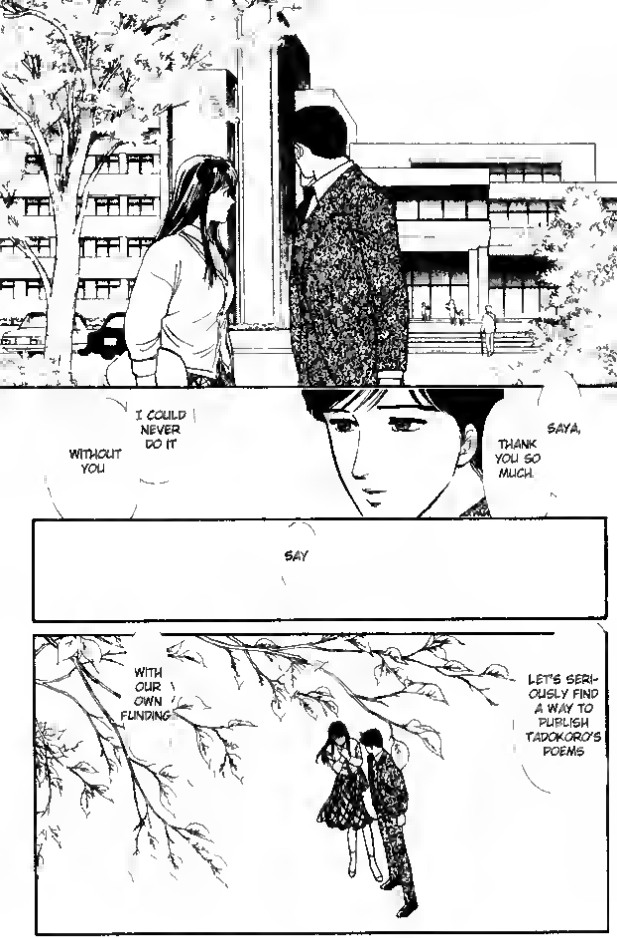
PLEASE, I BEG YOU...
YOU CAN'T SAY THAT.
CAN YOU CALL YOURSELF A MOTHER?!

AH, HELLO? HELLO?
SAYA
SO CRUEL.
THAT WOMAN DOESN'T DESERVE TO BE HIS MOTHER!
HOW COULD SOMEONE LIKE HER BE TADOKORO'S MOTHER?!
I CAN'T ACCEPT IT!!

YOU WOKE UP— TADOKORO
SAYA
AH, YES SENSEI
I
punch
YES,
CRY OR SHOUT OR WHATEVER YOU WANT
SENSEI ISN'T HERE ANYMORE
BUT YOU MUSTN'T AVERT YOUR EYES FROM IT PLEASE TRY YOUR BEST!
YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM THE REALITY OF THE WORLD!

Saya went to visit Tadokoro every single day
.....
SO PLEASE, DON'T GIVE UP!!
TADOKORO!
WE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU.
MANABU AND I WILL ALWAYS BE HERE FOR YOU!
HOW'RE YOU TODAY?
MANABU
NOT BAD
WHAT A LOUSY HUSBAND YOU ARE. HOW COULD YOU LEAVE YOUR WIFE TO FAWN OVER ANOTHER MAN WITHOUT FEELING ANYTHING?
YOU AND YOUR MOUTH!!
DO I NEED TO FEEL INTIMIDATED?

PLEASE HOLD ME IN YOUR ARMS
What?!!
SURE
WHAT'S IT?
COULD YOU LISTEN TO MY LAST WISH?
SAYA, YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME TOMORROW.
I ALREADY CONTACTED MY GIRLFRIEND
HN.
HEARING YOU TALK LIKE THIS MUST MEAN YOU'RE GETTING MUCH BETTER
AH, WOMEN
ARE SO WARM AND TENDER
You got some guts doing that in front of her husband
GOOD BYE
SNUGGLE


I COULD NEVER DO IT
WITHOUT YOU
SAYA, THANK YOU SO MUCH.
SAY
WITH OUR OWN FUNDING
LET'S SERIOUSLY FIND A WAY TO PUBLISH TADOKORO'S POEMS

We didn't see Tadokoro again after that.

But he was still popular among girls.

More likely, it's because he never sincerely loved those women.

Rumor says he broke up with the girl he lived with.

However, because of his lousy personality, no girl could stay with him for too long.

WE'LL CARRY ON SENSEI'S WISH

THIS IS NOT FOR JUST ANYBODY.

BUT FOR THE SAKE OF THOSE WONDERFUL POEMS AND OUR BELOVED SENSEI

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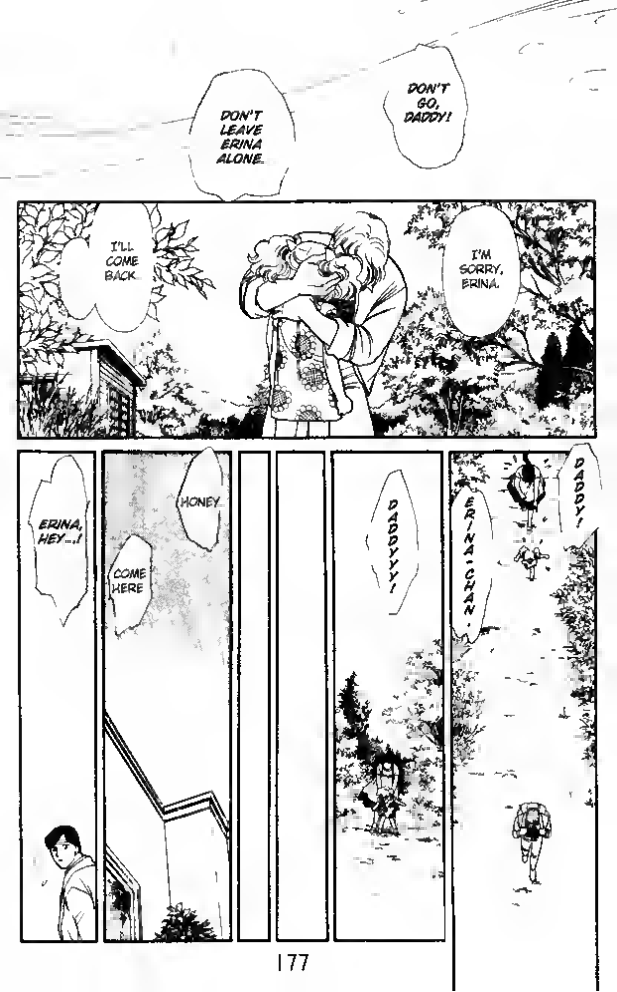
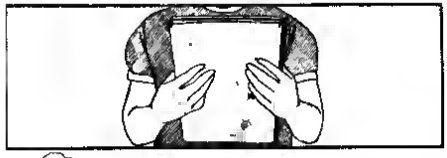
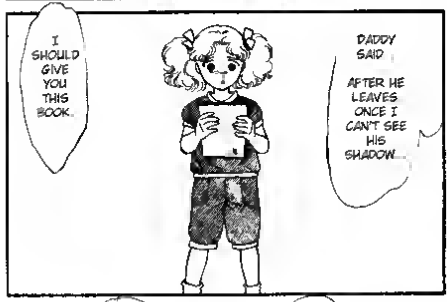
MOM, THERE'S A GUY HERE ASKING FOR DAD
EH?
IS HE FROM DAD'S OFFICE?
I DON'T KNOW THIS GUY.
OH, HE HAS A LITTLE GIRL WITH HIM TOO
IF IT'S NOT ABOUT WORK ...
rustle
TADOKORO?

SHE'S MY DAUGHTER, THE PERSON I LOVE THE MOST RIGHT NOW
You're Erina, right? You daddy is busy! Why don't I take you to the bathroom?
I'D LIKE YOU TO TAKE CARE OF THIS GIRL
TRAVELING?
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
YES
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
WHEN WILL YOU COME BACK?
I DON'T KNOW YET. BUT I WILL BE BACK

BUT YOU WERE ITS CREATOR
IT INCLUDES COMMENTS FROM SEVERAL EDITORS AS WELL
I FUNDED THE PUBLISHING MYSELF
AS A POEM COMPILATION, IT'S NOT YET PERFECT
PUBLISHED WITHOUT PERMISSION.
YOUR BOOK
HERE
TAKE ONE WITH YOU
IT WAS SENSEI'S REQUEST
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH ME PUBLISHING THIS COMPILATION.
MAN-ABU
I DON'T NEED YOUR OPINION
THERE WAS A PUBLISHING HOUSE ASKING TO MAKE IT A COMMERCIAL PUBLICATION
I'D LIKE TO GIVE THEM A GO.


DON'T LEAVE ERINA ALONE.
DON'T GO, DADDY!
I'LL COME BACK.
I'M SORRY, ERINA.
ERINA, HEY...!
HONEY.
COME HERE
DADDYYY!
ERINA-CHAN.
DADDY!
DADDY!




I SHOULD GIVE YOU THIS BOOK.
DADDY SAID AFTER HE LEAVES ONCE I CAN'T SEE HIS SHADOW...

WHAT HAPPENED?
SRS BANG

EVEN IN THE PAPERS SHOVED BETWEEN PAGES
FLOP
FLOP
THEY'RE POEMS
THERE ARE SO MANY OF THEM
A NOTEBOOK?

THERE ARE SO MANY
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT
THERE'S A LETTER TOO
The poems I left with my daughter were written continuously since the day I left school
Manabu, I've always relied on your help since we were students I don't know how to repay you.
Please forgive me Not only did I never repay you, I even teased you about the girl you love.
rustle

The minute I knew I would never see Kusakabe-sensei again, it dawned on me that nobody would take these poems to read anymore
These poems are something I wrote for myself in my leisure.
I meant not to write anything anymore after I dropped out
But I cannot live without writing poems
When I thought that, as Erina's father, I might have nothing left for this child, I tried my best to collect them. These are all I have.

JUST AS SENSEI SAID, YOU'RE SUCH A BEAUTIFUL PHENOMENON
PURE AND UNBLEMISHED, BRILLIANTLY SHINING
"I CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT WRITING THEM."
INDEED, YOU CANNOT
THERE IS NO POET LIKE YOU IN THE WORLD
YOU'RE SUCH AN IDIOT
AND YOUR LIFE IS SO CRAZY

If I may say it one more time, please take care of my daughter

Also, please give my thanks to your wife who was always there to encourage me to move forward

Tadokoro Sou

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I BROUGHT GIFTS FOR YOU.
FINE FINE COME ON OUT
REAL LY?!
IT WAS ERINA'S FAULT.
ERINA, HAVE YOU BEEN A GOOD GIRL?
SHUU-SAMA ALWAYS PICKS ON ME.
WELCOME HOME UNCLE
DADDY WILL DEFI-NITELY COME BACK RIGHT?
YES
DEFI-NITELY.
He still wouldn't come back.
UNCLE
Our days were filled with happiness
But one thing remained ...

Though I was busy with work, I set aside time to compile his poems.
NO, ERINA ISN'T LONELY, REALLY!
I'LL UNDER-STAND
BUT IF YOU EVER FEEL LONELY JUST TELL ME
DO YOU FEEL LONELY?
WHAT'S THE MATTER, ERINA?
Whoa
NO, ERINA ISN'T LONELY ANYMORE!
GOOD GIRL, ERINA.

Buuuu

Hmm

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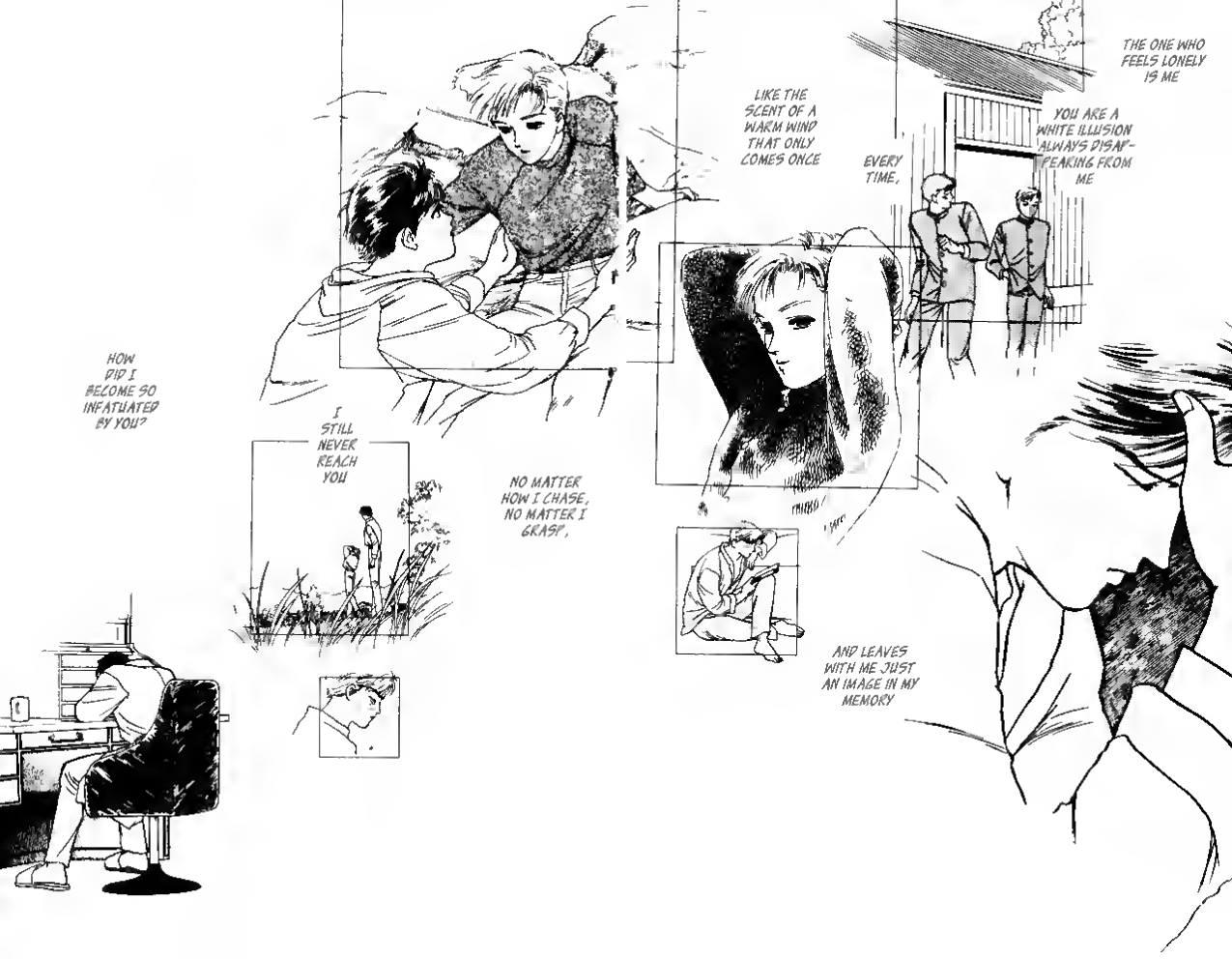
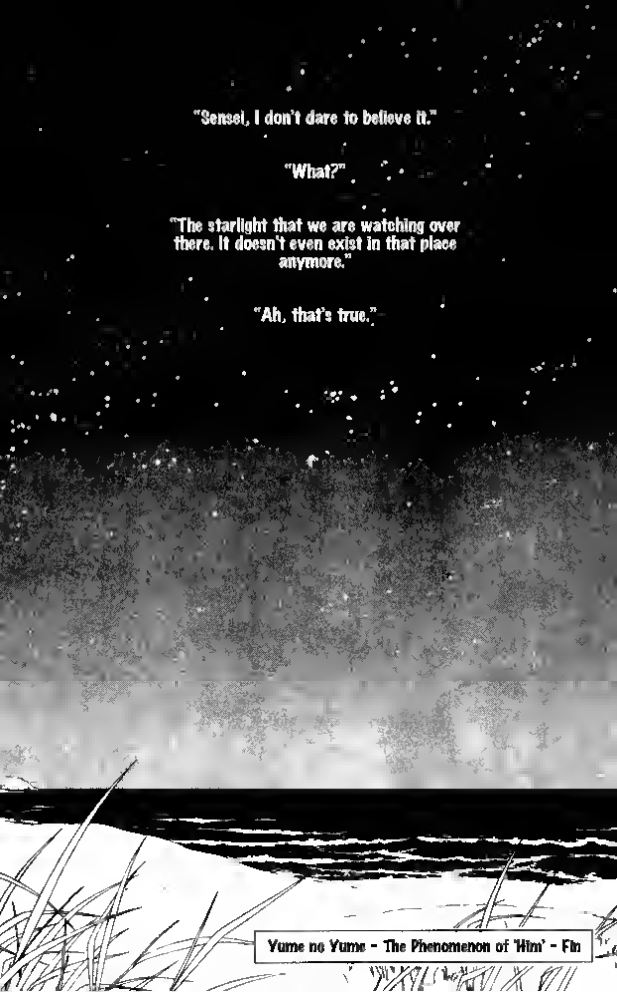

THE ONE WHO FEELS LONELY IS ME
YOU ARE A WHITE ILLUSION ALWAYS DISAP-PEARING FROM ME
EVERY TIME,
LIKE THE SCENT OF A WARM WIND THAT ONLY COMES ONCE
AND LEAVES WITH ME JUST AN IMAGE IN MY MEMORY
NO MATTER HOW I CHASE, NO MATTER I GRASP,
I STILL NEVER REACH YOU
HOW DID I BECOME SO INFATUATED BY YOU?


"Sensei, I don't dare to believe it."
"What?"
"The starlight that we are watching over there. It doesn't even exist in that place anymore."
"Ah, that's true."

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